

SPECIAL CLAIMS

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*Modified by convention of August 17, 1929*¹

*Supplemented by convention of April 24, 1934*²

*Terminated January 2, 1945*³

43 Stat. 1722; Treaty Series 676

SPECIAL CLAIMS CONVENTION

The United States of America and the United Mexican States, desiring to settle and adjust amicably claims arising from losses or damages suffered by American citizens through revolutionary acts within the period from November 20, 1910, to May 31, 1920, inclusive, have decided to enter into a Convention for that purpose, and to this end have nominated as their Plenipotentiaries:

The President of the United States:

George F. Summerlin, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the United States of America in Mexico.

The President of the United Mexican States:

Alberto J. Pani, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers found to be in due and proper form, have agreed upon the following Articles:

ARTICLE I

All claims against Mexico of citizens of the United States, whether corporations, companies, associations, partnerships or individuals, for losses or damage suffered by persons or by their properties during the revolutions and

¹ TS 802, *post*, p. 963.

² TS 878, *post*, p. 1004.

³ Date of final payment by Mexico.

disturbed conditions which existed in Mexico, covering the period from November 20, 1910, to May 31, 1920, inclusive, including losses or damages suffered by citizens of the United States by reason of losses or damages suffered by any corporation, company, association or partnership in which citizens of the United States have or have had a substantial and bona fide interest, provided an allotment to the American claimant by the corporation, company, association or partnership of his proportion of the loss or damage is presented by the claimant to the Commission hereinafter referred to, and which claims have been presented to the United States for its interposition with Mexico, as well as any other such claims which may be presented within the time hereinafter specified, shall be submitted to a Commission consisting of three members.

Such Commission shall be constituted as follows: one member shall be appointed by the President of the United States; one by the President of United Mexican States; and the third, who shall preside over the Commission, shall be selected by mutual agreement between the two Governments. If the two Governments shall not agree within two months from the exchange of ratifications of this Convention in naming such third member, then he shall be designated by the President of the Permanent Administrative Council of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague described in Article 49 of the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes concluded at The Hague on October 18, 1907.⁴ In case of the death, absence or incapacity of any member of the Commission, or in the event of a member omitting or ceasing to act as such, the same procedure shall be followed for filling the vacancy as was followed in appointing him.

ARTICLE II

The Commissioners so named shall meet at Mexico City within six months after the exchange of the ratifications of this Convention, and each member of the Commission, before entering upon his duties, shall make and subscribe a solemn declaration stating that he will carefully and impartially examine and decide, according to the best of his judgment and in accordance with the principles of justice and equity, all claims presented for decision, and such declaration shall be entered upon the record of the proceedings of the Commission.

The Mexican Government desires that the claims shall be so decided because Mexico wishes that her responsibility shall not be fixed according to the generally accepted rules and principles of international law, but *ex gratia* feels morally bound to make full indemnification and agrees, therefore, that it will be sufficient that it be established that the alleged loss or damage in any case was sustained and was due to any of the causes enumerated in Article III hereof.

⁴ TS 536, *ante*, vol. 1, p. 594.

The Commission may fix the time and place of its subsequent meetings, as may be convenient, subject always to the special instructions of the two Governments.

ARTICLE III

The claims which the Commission shall examine and decide are those which arose during the revolutions and disturbed conditions which existed in Mexico covering the period from November 20, 1910, to May 31, 1920, inclusive, and were due to any act by the following forces:

- (1) By forces of a Government *de jure* or *de facto*.
- (2) By revolutionary forces as a result of the triumph of whose cause governments *de facto* or *de jure* have been established, or by revolutionary forces opposed to them.
- (3) By forces arising from the disjunction of the forces mentioned in the next preceding paragraph up to the time when the government *de jure* established itself as a result of a particular revolution.
- (4) By federal forces that were disbanded, and
- (5) By mutinies or mobs, or insurrectionary forces other than those referred to under subdivisions (2), (3) and (4) above, or by bandits, provided in any case it be established that the appropriate authorities omitted to take reasonable measures to suppress insurrectionists, mobs or bandits, or treated them with lenity or were in fault in other particulars.

ARTICLE IV

In general, the Commission shall adopt as the standard for its proceedings the rules of procedure established by the Mixed Claims Commission created under the Claims Convention between the two Governments signed July 4, 1868,⁵ in so far as such rules are not in conflict with any provision of this Convention. The Commission, however, shall have authority by the decision of the majority of its members to establish such other rules for its proceedings as may be deemed expedient and necessary, not in conflict with any of the provisions of this Convention.

Each Government may nominate and appoint agents and counsel who will be authorized to present to the Commission, orally or in writing, all the arguments deemed expedient in favor of or against any claim. The agents or counsel of either Government may offer to the Commission any documents, affidavits, interrogatories or other evidence desired in favor of or against any claim and shall have the right to examine witnesses under oath or affirmation before the Commission, in accordance with such rules of procedure as the Commission shall adopt.

⁵ TS 212, *ante*, p. 826.

The decision of the majority of the members of the Commission shall be the decision of the Commission.

The language in which the proceedings shall be conducted and recorded shall be Spanish or English.

ARTICLE V

The Commission shall keep an accurate record of the claims and cases submitted, and minutes of its proceedings with the dates thereof. To this end, each Government may appoint a Secretary; these Secretaries shall act as joint Secretaries of the Commission and shall be subject to its instructions. Each Government may also appoint and employ any necessary assistant secretaries and such other assistance as deemed necessary. The Commission may also appoint and employ any persons necessary to assist in the performance of its duties.

ARTICLE VI

Since the Mexican Government desires to arrive at an equitable settlement of the claims of the citizens of the United States and to grant them a just and adequate compensation for their losses or damages, the Mexican Government agrees that the Commission shall not disallow or reject any claim by the application of the general principle of international law that the legal remedies must be exhausted as a condition precedent to the validity or allowance of any claim.

ARTICLE VII

Every claim shall be filed with the Commission within two years from the date of its first meeting, unless in any case reasons for the delay, satisfactory to the majority of the Commissioners, shall be established, and in any such case the period for filing the claim may be extended not to exceed six additional months.⁶

The Commission shall be bound to hear, examine and decide, within five years from the date of its first meeting, all the claims filed.

Four months after the date of the first meeting of the Commissioners, and every four months thereafter, the Commission shall submit to each Government a report setting forth in detail its work to date, including a statement of the claims filed, claims heard and claims decided. The Commission shall be bound to decide any claim heard and examined within six months after the conclusion of the hearing of such claim and to record its decision.

ARTICLE VIII

The High Contracting Parties agree to consider the decision of the Commission as final and conclusive upon each claim decided, and to give full

⁶ For extension of duration of Special Claims Commission, see convention of Aug. 17, 1929 (TS 802), *post*, p. 963.

effect to such decisions. They further agree to consider the result of the proceedings of the Commission as a full, perfect and final settlement of every such claim upon the Mexican Government, arising from any of the causes set forth in Article III of this Convention. And they further agree that every such claim, whether or not filed and presented to the notice of, made, preferred or submitted to such Commission shall from and after the conclusion of the proceedings of the Commission be considered and treated as fully settled, barred and thenceforth inadmissible, provided the claim filed has been heard and decided.

ARTICLE IX

The total amount awarded to claimants shall be paid in gold coin or its equivalent by the Mexican Government to the Government of the United States at Washington.

ARTICLE X

Each Government shall pay its own Commissioner and bear its own expenses. The expenses of the Commission including the salary of the third Commissioner shall be defrayed in equal proportions by the two Governments.

ARTICLE XI

The present Convention shall be ratified by the High Contracting Parties in accordance with their respective Constitutions. Ratifications of this Convention shall be exchanged in Mexico City as soon as practicable and the Convention shall take effect on the date of the exchange of ratifications.

In witness whereof, the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed and affixed their seals to this Convention.

Done in duplicate at Mexico City this tenth day of September, 1923.

GEORGE F. SUMMERLIN [SEAL]

A. J. PANI [SEAL]